

Kentucky Department of Revenue Predicts Longer Wait for Refunds Due to Strengthened Security and Fraud Detection Analysis

Up to 21 days for electronic filers; 6 to 8 weeks for paper filers

Because of enhanced security features and fraud analysis tools, the Kentucky Department of Revenue (DOR) is estimating that refunds may take a bit longer to process this year—up to 21 days for electronic filers if their return is error free.

“While electronic filing is the fastest way to get refunds, the department wants Kentucky taxpayers to be aware that refunds may not be processed as quickly as in the past,” said Dan Bork, commissioner of the Kentucky Department of Revenue. “We have strong internal controls and we have implemented some new fraud detection processes, which protect both the taxpayer and the Commonwealth of Kentucky from fraudsters.”

In late January the department began accepting electronically filed tax returns and anticipates that most taxpayers will continue to file electronically. Electronic filing for individuals topped 85 percent last year.

According to the department, filing electronically is still safe and the quickest way for taxpayers to get their refund—and the only way to have their refund direct deposited. Refund requests from taxpayers who file paper forms could take 6 to 8 weeks.

“Unfortunately cyber criminals are continually changing their tactics and see filing fraudulent returns as a way to steal money,” said Mack Gillim, executive director of the Office of Processing and Enforcement. “Delaying refunds by just a few weeks allows us to better detect attempts at identity theft and ensure taxpayer refunds do not fall needlessly into the hands of criminals.”

For the 2014 tax year, the department stopped more than \$16.5 million in fraudulent refund requests.

Protect Yourself from Tax-Related Identity Theft

The department reminds taxpayers to protect their personal information and actively monitor their credit reports, charge cards and bank accounts for any suspicious activity. Tax-related identity theft occurs when someone uses another person’s stolen Social Security number (SSN) to file a tax return claiming a fraudulent refund. Taxpayers may be unaware that this has happened until they file their return and discover that a return already has been filed using their SSN. Or the taxpayer may receive a letter from DOR or the IRS saying a suspicious return has been filed using their SSN.

Know the warning signs

Be alert to possible tax-related identity theft if you are contacted by DOR or the IRS about:

- ☐ More than one tax return that was filed for you,

- ☐ You owe additional tax, have a refund offset or have had collection actions taken against you for a year you did not file a tax return, or
- ☐ IRS or DOR records indicate you received wages or other income from an employer for whom you did not work.

For more information and resources related to identity theft, visit the Federal Trade Commission's IdentityTheft.gov website.

To contact the Kentucky Department of Revenue, call the taxpayer assistance line at 502-564-4581 or email individualincometax@ky.gov.

Electronic filing in Kentucky has been available to individuals since the 1995 tax year. In the last 5 years, e-filing for individuals has increased from 65 percent to more than 85 percent for tax year 2014.

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